

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-07 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 H-01 MC-02 AID-05  
IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /065 W  
-----281804Z 011585 /53

P 281703Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1398  
INFO SECDEF ISA/DSAA WASHDC PRIORITY  
USCINCEUR ECJ4/7 VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T RABAT 1656

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGSC MASS MO  
SUBJECT: MINIGUNS AND MACHINE GUNS FOR HELICOPTERS

REF STATE 57956 AND PREVIOUS

1. BECAUSE OF POLISARIO AMBUSHES OF VEHICLE CONVOYS  
IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO, AS WELL AS IN THE SAHARA, GOM  
PLANS TO USE ITS AGUSTA BELL HELICOPTERS FOR CONVOY ESCORT  
DUTY. VEHICLE LOSSES TO POLISARIO ATTACKS AND MINES ARE  
REPORTED TO BE SUBSTANTIAL. PREVIOUS MOROCCAN  
TACTICS HAD BEEN TO USE FIXED WING AIRCRAFT (T-6S, FOUGA MAGISTERS  
AND F-5A/B'S) ON STRIP ALERT TO RESPOND WHEN POLISARIO  
ATTACKS OCCURRED. BECAUSE OF CHANGING POLISARIO TACTICS THE  
USE OF FIXED WING AIRCRAFT HAS NOT BEEN AS EFFECTIVE RECENTLY.  
THIS HAS LED TO GOM'S DECISION TO USE THE HELICOPTERS.

2. THE HELICOPTERS USE 2.75 INCH ROCKETS AS THE PRIMARY WEAPON  
TO COUNTER THE POLISARIO ATTACKERS. THE POLISARIO, HOWEVER,  
ARE USING 12.7MM (50CAL) MACHINE GUNS (MG'S) TO ATTACK THE  
HELICOPTERS. ALTHOUGH THE EFFECTIVE RANGE OF THE ROCKETS IS  
GREATER THAN THAT OF THE 12.7MM MG'S THE HELICOPTER MUST FLY  
THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE FIELD OF MG FIRE ON PULL-OFF FROM THE  
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ROCKET RUN. GOM HAS NO MACHINE GUNS ON THEIR HELICOPTERS AND  
HENCE LACK THE MEANS TO SUPPRESS THE POLISARIO AAA FIRE.

3. COL KABBAJ, INSPECTOR RMAF, DESIRES TO EQUIP SOME OF HIS  
HELICOPTERS WITH 50 CAL OR HEAVIER MG'S TO PROVIDE STAND-OFF RANGE  
FOR HIS FLAK SUPPRESSION. (THIS ASSUMES THAT THE HELICOPTERS  
WOULD BE USED IN PARIS WITH ONE USING ROCKETS AGAINST VEHICLES

WHILE THE SECOND SUPPRESSES THE FLAK.) KABBAJ ORIGINALLY DID NOT WANT THE M-21 OR M-23 MINIGUN SYSTEMS BECAUSE HE DEEMED THE EFFECTIVE RANGE TO BE INADEQUATE; HOWEVER, IF HEAVIER CALIBER GUN SYSTEMS ARE NOT AVAILABLE HE WOULD ACCEPT THE M-21 OR 23.

4. ALTHOUGH KABBAJ HAS PREVIOUSLY STIPULATED THAT THE MACHINE GUNS MUST BE PILOT OPERATED HE MAY NOW CONSIDER FLEXIBLE DOOR MOUNTED GUNS IF THEY ARE AVAILABLE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MACHINE GUNS, MILITARY SALES, HELICOPTERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Expiration:**  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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